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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/925,903	08/09/2001	Rajko Milovanovic	TI-30847	6493

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EXAMINER

ZHEN, LI B

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2194

DATE MAILED: 02/07/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/925,903

Applicant(s)

MILOVANOVIC, RAJKO

Examiner

Li B. Zhen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 October 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.



WILLIAM THOMSON
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1 – 5 are pending in the current application.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

4. Claims 1 – 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Currently amended claim 1 recite the new limitations: "carry out a work load assignment beyond reading and any acknowledgement of receipt of the request" and "determine if a request for completion of the work load assignment has been completed by the deadline" [claim 1, lines 3-4 and lines 8-9]. Although applicant's specification discloses generating a request of a task, applicant's specification does not implicitly or inherently describes the request as a work load assignment action beyond reading and any acknowledgement of receipt of the request. Applicant's specification provide very few examples of a request of a task; however, the specification specifically discloses that the system may provide a one-click done action button in the system environment for receiving (reading and/or listening to) messages [p. 4, line 21 – p. 5, line 3]. There is a done button for receiving, reading and/or listening to messages. This means that the request is to read and/or listen to the messages because a done button is provided to the receiver to acknowledging receipt and reading of the request. Examiner was unable

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to locate any disclosure of a request to carry out a work load assignment beyond reading and any acknowledgement of receipt of the request and determine if a request for completion of the work load assignment has been completed by the deadline. Therefore, the applicant fails to disclose the newly recited limitations in the specification as filed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. **Claims 1 – 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,854,007 to Hammond [cited in the previous office action], in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,549,950 to Lytle et al. [hereinafter referred to as Lytle].**

7. As to claim 1, Hammond teaches the invention substantially as claimed including an electronic communications system [col. 4, lines 29 – 47], a method for automated follow-up of a request [sending a follow-up message to one or more recipients; col. 5, lines 45 – 61] comprising the steps of:

generating a request of a task to be completed by users [review of the message by a recipient; col. 4, lines 55 – 67] at one or more receivers [Message Sender routine receives an electronic message to be sent to one or more recipients, receives message tracking information for the recipients; col. 8, lines 46 – 63] with a deadline at a sender [update the Message Tracking Table entry with the specified Review Reminder Time for the message as well as any specified Review Reminder Options. The routine then continues at step 337 to set a Review Reminder Timer for the recipient that will begin when the message is sent, Fig. 3B; col. 9, lines 24 – 42] and recording that request at the sender location [update the Message Tracking Table entry with the specified Review

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Reminder Time for the message; col. 9, lines 25 – 42; col. 6, lines 56 – 65] indicating deadline [Review Reminder Time for the message; col. 9, lines 24 - 42] and automatically setting up a follow-up reminder at the sender location [step 337 to set a Review Reminder Timer for the recipient that will begin when the message is sent, Fig. 3B; col. 9, lines 36 – 42] to determine if a request has been completed by the deadline [Message Receipt Tracker routine receives notifications (in the illustrated embodiment, receipts) related to sent electronic messages (e.g., that a message was delivered or reviewed); col. 10, lines 5 – 23 and lines 37 – 43];

sending that request with a deadline message to one or more receivers [message deliver information could be stored with the message (e.g., as a header or as attributes of a message object); col. 3, lines 30 – 43];

receiving the request and deadline at the one or more receivers [col. 3, lines 30 – 43; routine sends the message to the designated recipient and updates the Message Tracking Table with the send time for the message, col. 9, lines 43 – 63];

determining at the one or more receivers when the users at the receivers indicate that the requested task is done [after a message has been accessed, activities such as scrolling a text window or selecting text may indicate that the message is being reviewed; col. 5, lines 17 – 44]; and

sending notice to sender when request is completed [recipient computer systems provide receipts when messages are received and when messages are reviewed; col. 5, lines 16 – 45] and the done notice is recorded at the sender location [After receiving notification of message delivery or review, the Message Receipt Tracker stores appropriate information from the notification in the Message Tracking Table; col. 5, lines 16 – 45]. Although Hammond teaches the invention substantially, Hammond does not specifically teach a request with a deadline to carry out a work load assignment action beyond reading and any acknowledgement of receipt of the request.

However, Lytle teaches an electronic mail system that allows a sender or recipient to indicate specific follow-up action associated with a message accompanied by a due date, which generates reminders and past due notices [col. 4, line 58 – col. 5, line 12], determining if the follow-action is done [Once the follow-up action is complete,

the recipient may mark the message to so indicate the completed state; col. 21, lines 3 - 15] and providing reminders of an indication that an item is past due [col. 26, lines 39 - 50]. Lytle discloses an e-mail message that identifies a follow-up action (e.g., fax report), or action item, that is required to deal with the message, and may also include a deadline [col. 20, line 56 - col. 21, line 15]. Another example of a follow-up action is voting in response to an e-mail message [col. 33, lines 5 - 42].

8. It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to apply the teaching of a request with a deadline to carry out a work load assignment action beyond reading and any acknowledgement of receipt of the request as taught by Lytle to the invention of Hammond because this allows a sender to delegate responsibilities to a recipient [col. 3, lines 14 - 17 of Lytle] and facilitates project management by the provision of reminders and past due notification [col. 26, lines 57 - 59 of Lytle].

9. As to claim 2, Hammond teaches the sender determines if a done notice is received and request is completed before the deadline and generates a message to the one or more receivers if it has not been completed and the done notice has not been received by the deadline date [routine continues at step 520 to determine if the Review Reminder Time period has expired. If so, the routine continues at step 525 to send a reminder message as indicated by the Review Reminder Options; col. 11, lines 6 - 22].

10. As to claim 3, Hammond teaches the sender automatically sends a message to the one or more receivers if the deadline date has not been met [send a reminder message; col. 11, lines 6 - 22].

11. As to claim 4, Hammond teaches the sender also automatically sends a second deadline date [after a time period expires, the routine sets new timers if the time period continues to apply; col. 10, lines 48 - 63] with a second message if a deadline has not been met and sets a second follow-up reminder [routine also updates the Review

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Reminder Records in the Message Tracking Table to reflect the date and time that the reminder message was sent; col. 11, lines 6 – 22].

12. As to claim 5, Hammond teaches the sender determines if a done request is completed and a done notice has been received before the second deadline and generates a message to said one or more receivers if it has not been completed by the second deadline date [routine continues at step 545 to determine if there are more entries in the Message Tracking Table. If so, the routine continues at step 550 to select the next entry in the Message Tracking Table, and then returns to step 510. If it was instead determined in step 535 that there are not more entries in the Message Tracking Table, the routine continues at step 555 to determine whether to continue processing the Message Tracking Table from the beginning. If so, the routine returns to step 505; col. 11, lines 38 – 50].

Conclusion

13. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

U.S. Patent No. 6,212,553 to Lee et al. teaches sending and receiving flags and associated data in e-mail transmissions.

U.S. Patent No. RE38,633 to Srinivasan teaches an auto multi-project server system which automates the tasks of program management coordination.

U.S. Patent No. 6,424,995 to Shuman teaches a form for displaying an electronic message item.

14. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within

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TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

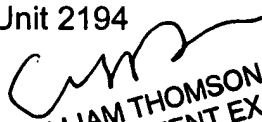
CONTACT INFORMATION

15. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Li B. Zhen whose telephone number is (571) 272-3768. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Fri, 8:30am - 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, William Thomson can be reached on 571-272-3718. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Li B. Zhen
Examiner
Art Unit 2194


WILLIAM THOMSON
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

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